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Coming up on three years of Indonesia's Prisoner Union!

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Editorial Note

Indonesian Prisoners Union, January 2026

Surely we can agree that 2025 was an extremely bleak year globally in the first quarter of this century—wars between states and class war in various parts of the world. Various sources state that throughout 2025, anti-government protests took place in more than 70 countries. And in Indonesia, the wave of protests that took place from late August to early September last year can be described as the largest mass action—by scale, intensity, and number of arrests—since the collapse of Suharto's fascist New Order regime in 1998.

The arrests and manhunts against protesters continued until December 2025. Based on data released by the Youth Movement Against Criminalization (Gerakan Muda Lawan Kriminalisasi / GMLK) during an online press conference on Monday, 12 January 2026, as many as 652 people were dragged before the courts and charged under various articles such as vandalism, assault, provocation, and other elastic "rubber" articles.

Under this neo-New Order regime, we are living under the shadow of fascism, which is slowly revealing its savage character. Our strength and courage as a young generation are being tested. So too are our strength and courage as a collective.

In late October 2025, when the mass arrests were being carried out on a massive scale by the government, we received news that one of our comrades had also been arrested. Some of us panicked, and of course, became afraid. Without first discussing it with other internal comrades (comrades inside the prisons), those of us who panicked decided to deactivate our Instagram account as quickly as possible. And we forgot that fear spreads. The fear that had already spread among us, compounded by bad news that later struck those closest to us, temporarily flattened our courage more than it should have. We were aware of this, but we agreed to lay low for some time afterwards as a strategic step.

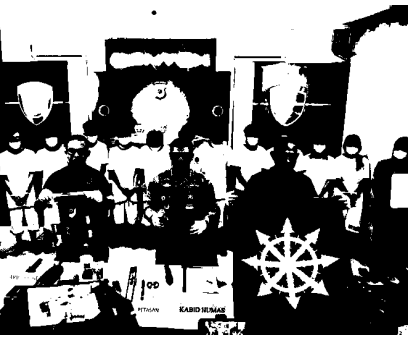
After a hiatus of more than a month, we agreed that we would no longer fear at the fear itself; because of that we decided to would be more cold-headed and prioritize spreading courage so we could strengthen one another.

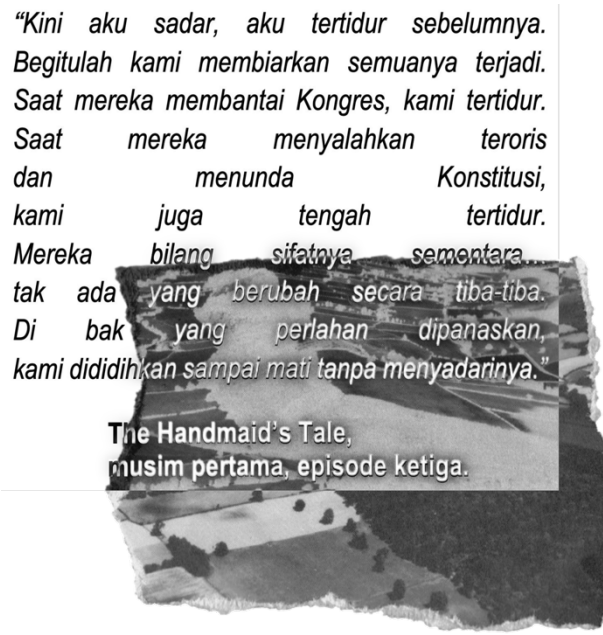
Calmness and rationality—those are the two things we need right now. We realize that much misinformation has circulated regarding detained protesters and also regarding us as a collective. Being cautious is very important, but paranoia is also dangerous. We need to recognize that hoaxes and prejudices against comrades or even “potential comrades,” when taken in uncritically, are an effective way to break solidarity and unity in the struggle against authoritarianism itself.

We apologize to any individuals or anti-authoritarian network groups who may have felt hurt or betrayed by our attitude or response, which may have been slow or less than appropriate in responding to calls for help directed to us—whether before, during, or after our previous hiatus.

Let us amplify cross-sector solidarity! Cultivate comradeship across ideologies (except fascism, racism, and queerphobia, of course!). Because, as Senartogok sings in one of their songs, “there is only me, you all, and love”!

Besides courage, in this increasingly worsening political climate, do not grow tired of continuing to spread and amplify awareness of the dangers of being silent, passive, and apolitical. ★




“Kini aku sadar, aku tertidur sebelumnya. Begitulah kami membiarkan semuanya terjadi. Saat mereka membantai Kongres, kami tertidur. Saat mereka menyalahkan teroris dan menunda Konstitusi, kami juga tengah tertidur. Mereka bilang sifatnya sementara... tak ada yang berubah secara tiba-tiba. Di bak yang perlahan dipanaskan, kami dididihkan sampai mati tanpa menyadarinya.”
The Handmaid’s Tale,
musim pertama, episode ketiga.

Daftar Solidaritas Tahanan

(As of 6 February 2026)

Until now, there is still no definitive data on how many civilians were detained and prosecuted in connection with the wave of mass actions in Indonesia from late August to early September 2025. So far, the "most complete" data only comes from the Youth Movement Against Criminalization (GMLK), released via an online press conference on Monday, 12 January 2026.[1]

In said release, GMLK recorded that as of 31 December 2025, there were at least 652 detainees from various regions criminalized in relation to the wave of mass actions. This number does not yet include **7 detainees in Samarinda, East Kalimantan**, whose cases were only later discovered to have begun trial, with the first hearing on 13 January 2026, as well as possible detainees from various other regions that not yet reached by media coverage. **This lack of data clarity itself is alarming, as it creates a serious risk of enforced disappearances by the state going unexposed.**

Therefore, with all the limitations that exist, Serikat Tahanan is trying to share updated information regarding names and trial outcomes from the Prisoner Solidarity List (December 2025) that we previously published on Instagram, along with other cases we were able to compile up to early February 2026.[2]

UPDATE: Detainees of the August 2025 Mass Uprisings

A summary of chronology/charges and the names of other defendants can be seen on our Instagram account (Prisoner Solidarity List December 2025, Parts 1–2). ***The list below only includes new names or those whose situations are known to have changed/been updated.***

Bandung, West Java

False arrest cluster *(each sentenced to 6 months in prison, currently filing appeal):*
(**1**) Very Kurnia Kusumah; (**2**) Joy Erlando Pandiangan; (**3**) Eli Yana; (**4**) Muhammad Vanza Alfarizy; (**5**) M. Subhan Abdul Ghoni; (**6**) Muhammad Rifa Aditya; (**7**) Muhamad Jalaluddin Mukhlis; and (**8**) Jatnika Alan Ramadhani Septiawan.

Arbitrary arrest cluster *(each sentenced to 5 months in prison, released on 29/01/26):*
(**1**) Ariel Octa Dwiyan; (**2**) Angga Friansyah; (**3**) Putra Rizwan Annas; (**4**) Wanda Abdul Rahman.

Random arrest cluster:

1. Wawan Hermawan – *sentenced to 7 months*
2. Reyhan Fauzan Akbar – *sentenced to 4 months*

Cyber manhunt cluster *(each sentenced to 6 months in prison):*
(**1**) Rifa Rahnabila; (**2**) Arfa Febrianto; (**3**) Rifal Zhafran; (**4**) Deni Ruhiyat; (**5**) Rizky Fauzi; (**6**)

Azriel Agung Maulana; (**7**) Yusuf Miraj; (**8**) Moch. Sidik; and (**9**) Muhibuddin.

Electronic and Information Law Cluster *(each sentenced to 6 months in prison):*
(**1**) Muhammad Zaki; (**2**) Arya Yudha; and (**3**) Marshall Andy Kaswara.

In addition, there are also: (**1**) Zanif Albani Yusuf; (**2**) Muhammad Sulaeman; (**3**) Angga Wijaya; (**4**) Rivaldi; and (**5**) Cheiza. There are also two detainees in custody: (**1**) Reyhard Rumbayan *(city detention)*; and (**2**) Dena Muhammad Aditya.

Location of detention:
Kebon Waru Detention Center (save for Rifa, held in Sukamiskin Women's Detention Center).
Further information:

- @aksikamisanbdg
- @kertas.pulih
- @lbhbandung
- SIPP PN Bandung

Cibinong, West Java

1. Asep Sunandar – *sentenced to 6 months in prison.*
2. Riyan Riadi – *sentenced to 6 months in prison.*
3. Mugianto – *on trial.*

Location of detention: Pondok Rajeg Prison.
Further info: @bogorcalling (Instagram), SIPP PN Cibinong

Jakarta

Package couriers charged with vandalism:
(**1**) Arpan Ramdani; and (**2**) Muhammad Adriyan.
Both were sentenced to 10 months in prison, substituted with 1 year of probation.

Indonesian Political Prisoners Union:

1. Khariq Anhar – *acquitted interlocutorily at the "timpa teks" case; his incitement charge is still ongoing.*

Location of detention:
Salemba Prison, Central Jakarta.
Further information:
@setapol.indonesia (Instagram) and SIPP PN Jakarta Pusat

Alternative media admins:

1. Yusuf Maulana
2. Bongka Dzaky M
3. Taufiqul SF
4. Mansurni Abadi

Bongka and Taufiqul have been moved to Cipinang Prison. Yusuf remains at the Metro Jaya Police Detention Center.

Other Central Jakarta detainees:
(**1**) Muhammad Azzril; (**2**) Neosowa Rezeky.
Both sentenced to 7 months. Source: SIPP PN Jakarta Pusat.

(**3**) Laras Faizati Khairunnisa – *sentenced to 6 months, substituted with 1 year probation.*
Further information:
@lbhapik.jakarta (Instagram)

As well as **21 other detainees** who were released from Salemba Prison after sentenced to 10 months (29/01/2025) substituted

with 1 year of probation.

60+ North Jakarta detainees, *inter alia*:
(**1**) Nur Salam; (**2**) Eka Surya Putra; (**3**) Rendy Kurniawan; (**4**) Leno Andhika – *Each sentenced to 6 months in prison.*

(**5**) R – *on trial.*
(**6**) AN – *sentenced to 4 months 21 days, released (27/01/26).*
Detention location: Cipinang Detention Center, East Jakarta.
Further information:
@wccpuantara and @jelajah.comm (Instagram), and SIPP PN Jakarta Utara

Pekalongan, Central Java
1. Rafli Maulana – *sentenced to 8 months in prison.*

Location of detention: Pekalongan Detention Center Class 2A, Lodji.
Further information:
kamisanpekalonganraya.my.id and SIPP PN Pekalongan

Jember, East Java
Fahril Maulid al Hilal – *charged with 6 months in prison; verdict hearing scheduled for 09/02/26.*
Location of detention: Jember Prison.
Further information:
@aksikamisanjember and @lpm_imparsial (Instagram)

Malang, Jawa Timur
From a total of 19 detainees, *inter alia*:
(**1**) Farendra Devani Ramaputra (*on trial*); and

(**2**) M. Ilham; (**3**) Bagus Ahad Dian Pratama; (**4**) Muhammad Syabil Usman; (**5**) Awani Ken Putra Bagaskara; (**6**) Yogananda Anuraga; and (**7**) Bagas Reza Anggara Putra (*each sentenced to 5 months in prison*).

Further information:
- @ylbhi_lbh.malang
- @ylbhi_lbhsurabaya
- SIPP PN Malang

Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan
1. Randi and Rian (*sentenced to 6 months*)
2. Zyair Muzyaitir (*sentenced to 1 year in prison*)

Location of detention: Makassar Detentino Center Class 1.
Further information:
@lbh_makassar and @bemunm_ (Instagram)

Samarinda, Kalimantan Timur
(**1**) Rian; (**2**) Ridhwan; (**3**) Aisyar; (**4**) Fikri; (**5**) Lae; (**6**) Nico; and (**7**) Erik.
All are currently on trial.

Informasi lebih lanjut:
@kelompokbelajar_anakmuda and @mahardhikasamarinda

Surabaya, Jawa Timur

1. Rizqi Huseini – *sentenced to 6 months in prison*.
2. Edo Krisna A – *sentenced to 4 months 20 days, released (17/01/26).*
3. Mikael Alexandro Ligouri
4. Dhafana Aditya Lukito

   sentenced to 5 months in prison.
5. Rafif Nashrullah
6. Rizky Gilang Aprilianto

   sentenced to 4 months 15 days in prison, released (13/01/26).
7. Risky Aidil Rahmaddani
8. Muhammad Aldi
9. Ali Arasyi
10. Rizky Amanah Putra

    currently facing trial (charged with 6 months in prison).
11. Andri Irawan
12. Achmad Rivaldo F

    currently facing trial (charged with 7 months in prison).
13. Farid Surya Firmansyah – *released (31/12/25).*
14. Dzulkifli Maulana Tabriz – *released on the condition of a one-year probation period (27/01/26).*

Further information: @kontras_surabaya, @ylbhi_lbhsurabaya, and @surabayatanpajeruji (Instagram)

Bali

2. Arief Triputra Purba
3. Fairuz Iman Nugraha

   sentenced to 5 months, substituted with a 6-month probation period.
4. Mario Taniadi
5. Rivaldi Ikhsan

   sentenced to 5 months in prison.
6. Andre Surya Dinata
7. I Putu Bagus Sujaya D
8. I Nyoman Ragil Tri L
9. I Ketut Mardiana

   sentenced to 2 months and 25 days.
10. Moch. Fahmi Himawan
11. M Ryan Fashya S

    currently facing trial (charged with 7 months in prison).

Further information: @lbh_bali (Instagram) and SIPP PN Denpasar

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UPDATE: Other Class War Prisoners

A summary chronology can be seen on our Instagram account (Prisoner Solidarity List, December 2025, Part 2). ***This list only includes new names or those known to have had changes/updates in their situation.***

Kapa Farmers, West Pasaman, West Sumatra

It is known that 11 farmers have been criminalized, *inter alia*:
(**1**) Roi Diansyah; (**2**) Hendri Saputra; (**3**) Baharudin; (**4**) M. Rafli; (**5**) M. Yuzarman; and (**6**) Atnur Mely.

All six are still facing trial (objections/exceptions denied).

Further information: lbhpadang.org, spi.or.id, and SIPP PN Pasaman Barat

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Six Sukahaji Residents (Bandung, West Java)
(**1**) Suprapto; (**2**) Apip Suryana; (**3**) Cece Saepudin; (**4**) Warsidi Yohanes; (**5**) Yayus Retnowati; and (**6**) Ronald Rajagukguk.
All six were sentenced to 6 months in prison by the Bandung District Court on 14 Januari 2026 on charges of land grabbing/land occupation.

Further information: @sukahajimelawan and @lbhbandung (Instagram)

Pati, Central Java

1. Supriyono (Botok)
2. Teguh Istiyanto — *currently facing trial.*
3. Sugito
4. Tatas Amsori
5. Ahmad Sobirin — *sentenced to 1 year in prison.*
6. Miming Purwanto
7. Munaji – *charged with 1 year in prison.*

Further info: @masyarakatpati.bersatu (Instagram) and SIPP PN Pati

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Pakel, East Java

1. Harun (chairman of the Pakel Farmers Collective) – *currently facing trial.*

Further information: @ylbhi_lbhsurabaya and @rukunpakel (Instagram)

Rote Ndao, East Nusa Tenggara

1. Erasmus Frans Mandato (*currently facing trial*).

Further information: @saveboa.now and @serikat_muda_mudi_timur_semmut (Instagram)

Muara Kate, East Kalimantan

1. Misran Toni *(currently facing trial).*

Location of detention: Paser Prosecutor's Detention Center.
Further information: @muara_kate_melawan

Polongbangkeng Farmers, South Sulawesi

A number of farmers (3 women and 6 men; aged 50–82) received police summonses.

Further information: @lbh_makassar (Instagram)

Torete, Morowali, Central Sulawesi:

(**1**) Arlan Dahrin; (**2**) Royman M. Hamid; (**3**) Asdin; and (**4**) Ayudin. *Arrested during early Januari*

2026 in an agrarian conflict of the PSN NEMIE scheme in Torete and Buleleng villages.

Further information:
@komitepusatgrd and @grd_morowali (Instagram)

Papua:

1. Stenly Dambujai – *Stenly was taken back to the Merauke Police Station (25/01/26) after he and protesters were forcibly dispersed while carrying out a silent protest in front of the Merauke Cathedral Church, South Papua.*
2. The Sorong Four: (**1**) Abraham Goram Gaman; (**2**) Maksi Sangkek; (**3**) Piter Robaha; and (**4**) Nikson Mai.

Sentenced to 8 months in prison under Article 106 in conjunction with Article 55(1) of the Criminal Code.

Further information:

- @papuansspeak
- @lbhpapuamerauke
- tapol.org / @tapol.uk
- suarapapua.com

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[1] May be accessed through tempo.co/hukum/gmlk-jakarta-utara-kota-tahanan-politik-terbanyak-2106594 or @safenetvoice (Instagram).
[2] The names on this list were gathered solely for archival purposes of class war prisoners (regardless of any individual problematic indications/histories), and do not unanimously receive assistance/support from Indonesian Prisoners' Union. The extension of material solidarity remains to be considered in conjunction with our internal capacity and inputs from the general anti-authoritarian network.

REST IN POWER

Alfarisi Bin Rikosen
Tahanan Politik Surabaya

In memory of **Alfarisi bin Rikosen (21)**, who died in a cell at Class 1 Medaeng Detention Center, Surabaya, in the early hours of 30 December 2025, as a result of state neglect and structural violence.

Also in remembrance of **Affan Kurniawan, Andika Lutfi Falah, Iko Juliant Junior, Rheza Sendy Pratama, Septinus Andreas Sesa, Sumari**, as well as other combatants and civilians who died during the wave of mass actions in August–September 2025.

Disaster in Prison

by *dance.with.danger*

I am a prisoner convicted of sharing marijuana with an old friend, which landed me behind bars with a sentence of 5 years and 6 months, plus a 3-month subsidiary term. As of 1 January 2026, I have lived in this cursed place for 2 years and 6 months. I've already toured three different prisons, and each prison has brought its own different experiences and conditions...

Right now, I am in a prison not too far from the Aceh border. As we know, in late November there was a major flood that devastated the Aceh region.

Seeing and hearing about it through social media, and receiving news from prisoners who were in contact with relatives affected by the disaster, was already heartbreaking and deeply saddening. It was made worse by how slow and difficult the response from this dramatic fucking-moron regime was—a regime that concerned only with image-making content for social media, as if disasters were just ladders for political campaign to climb to more power.

Alright, fine, *blah blah blah*—that's about how it goes; there would be no end to venting rage about this fucking government.

The Sumatra flood and the conditions inside the prison where I'm being held—this is what I want to tell, at least from what I was able to witness and record. On a night at the end of November, rain fell from late night until dawn, non-stop, for two nights...

DAY ONE OF THE FLOOD.

When I woke up that morning, the water had already risen to about shin-level. I was on the second floor. All my friends on the first floor were still holding out in their cells, because there had not yet been any instruction for them to move upstairs.

In the first-floor block cells, the beds were about knee height, so

they could still move their belongings onto the beds to keep them from getting wet, and if they needed to use the toilet, they would go up to the second floor.

On the first day of the flood, prison life was already starting to get difficult. From morning until noon, the water from the water taps was still running, the meal ration arrived maybe an hour late than usual, and the drinking water—normally one gallon of Aqua (mineral water brand) per cell—suddenly became one gallon shared between two cells. People were still holding up and could understand the situation.

The maghrib call to prayer was heard. That night, first-floor prisoners were forced to sleep with floodwater entering their cells, only a few centimeters below their beds. And the rain still would not stop. Hopefully by tomorrow the water would recede so things could recover quickly.

DAY TWO OF THE FLOOD.

The next morning I woke up to a commotion like being at a swimming pool. I heard people counting down, because the fat guy (my cellmate) had climbed up a basketball post and was getting ready to jump—into the water! I was shocked hearing the splash; he must weigh close to 90 kg, and he did a front flip into the floodwater.

The floor level inside the block is lower than the ground outside (the yard). The water had risen to my stomach (my height is ±165 cm). It was exactly 10 o'clock, the *ompreng* (food ration) had still not arrived, and the drinking water stock had run out. So I went out and headed to the kitchen with other prisoners. The kitchen tamping (prisoner assigned as helper) complained that since dawn they had been carrying cooking equipment and moving it to the Bimker (*Bimbingan Kerja*; Work Guidance) room because the water had risen and flooded the kitchen, delaying cooking.

The kitchen *tamping* told every KBR (*kebersihan kamar*; cell sanitation person) to just wait at the middle gate for the *ompreng*

and drinking water.

The situation started to get out of control. People were getting angry. At one point I saw a canteen *tamping* carrying boxed rice meals and two large transparent plastic bags of Aqua water toward the workers' block (the conmen who are backed by guards and pay large weekly kickbacks—up to 10–30 million rupiah per cell). I immediately shouted, "Boxed rice, hey! Where are you taking that?! For those bosses, huh?" I tried to spark a fire in the middle of the flood. I really wanted to seize the food and drinking water right then, but I saw the pramuka (prison slang for the warden) staring at me, so I dropped the idea and just kept ranting and let him pass.

Here, if you have a problem with the *pramuka*, you can be sure the worst-case scenario is ending up in the strap cell, or becoming someone innocent yet still punished. They're notorious for scheming against other prisoners, looking for faults—possession of devices, or working too often with outsiders. Bootlickers!

Breakfast finally came. Late morning, nearly noon, we ate half-cooked rice with boiled eggs—no vegetables, no fruit, no porridge (even though it was porridge day)—in a state of irritation.

During the midday roll call, I asked an officer about conditions outside the prison. He answered, "The water in front of P2U-1 is between an adult's stomach and chest, and we officers can't go home and are forced to stay in the prison to make sure the situation remains controlled and safe." He answered without making eye contact.

I could feel the guard's wariness, as they had probably already heard whispers about escape and rebellion. Food supplies were becoming hard to get, and even instant noodles had become very expensive; the canteen had monopolized prices. Every product—instant noodles, bread, sauces, and others—went up 2 to 3 times. Instant noodles that normally cost IDR 4,000 became IDR 10,000.

The situation became even more uncontrollable. First-floor prisoners evacuated to the second floor. That night, cell doors were left open. No doors were locked. The electricity was out. Lighting came from candles, and there were little cooking fires fueled by plastic in several spots. That night we got by on half-cooked rice, instant noodles, and a few swallows of water. We ate while telling each other what we thought might happen tomorrow.

That night I couldn't sleep. I sat in front of the cell and talked with one of the prisoners from the elderly cell. He looked sick and weak, and he couldn't sleep either.

Suddenly there were shouts from the rehabilitation block. The sound stirred something inside me. Maybe I wasn't the only one who felt it. I heard one friend say, "Get ready, hey!" as if urging the others on, and another said, "Don't be stupid!"

In my heart, I made up my mind.

DAY THREE OF THE FLOOD.
After thinking, reflecting, imagining wild things in my head, and remembering that last night I had been afraid to provoke the prisoners and chose to back down when facing those bastard *pramuka*'s—but not today!

I incited the fat guy, who is fairly well known in this prison, to smash up the canteen and loot it, then break into the work room if no help came from them, because they make money by doing business in this place (ex: scam).

We went out in the morning and stayed in the small soccer field, splashing around in the water. Every time a canteen *tamping* carried food supplies, we stopped them, until no one dared pass anymore. This was politics: to force the *workers* (scammers) out of their block and their quarters. We formed a human wall facing off the *pramuka* and other bootlicking *tamping*'s.

The room bosses started coming out of their luxurious cells, and

prisoners began shouting and complaining when they saw them. There was even one room boss who didn't want to touch the water. He came down sitting inside a drink crate like it was a little boat, held steady by four of his lackeys.

Fucking bastard! I went up and threw water into the air so the dog would get wet. The conman/scammer room bosses walked together toward the KPLP office. We followed behind them, and a scuffle broke out between ordinary prisoners and the tamping, especially the pramuka.

It started at the first post gate guarded by pramuka. We forced it open and pushed them back to the second post, the turnstile gate, which we forced into a wide-open passage. I could really feel the rhythm of my friends' emotions. I enjoyed that moment. After so long in detention, I had almost forgotten what it felt like to shout and move forward without fear—like when we used to go out into the streets together.

Then we reached the Karupam post in front of the KPLP office, where all the officers had already gathered. The *worker*-bosses tried to calm the prisoners who had joined the demonstration. In the end, the prisoners agreed to hold a discussion and listen to instructions.

"SHIT!" I thought to myself. We were so close—just the Karupam post left, and after that the P2U gate. It all failed because the *worker*-bosses (cash cows) and the PORMAN/FORMEN (prisoners chosen as leaders or persons in charge in each block—block chiefs) were given loudspeakers and calmed the prisoners, then started discussions with the guards and the KPLP.

They voiced several complaints about drinking water, food, electricity, canteen prices, and medicines. In the middle of the discussion, the KPLP handed out cups of mineral water, bread, and cigarettes. Instantly everyone calmed down again and agreed to return to the housing blocks.

To be fair, that afternoon drinking water was no longer too hard to get. Canteen prices returned to normal. The water tamping could be seen working to move the artesian well to higher ground, and the electricity tamping were busy figuring out how to keep the generator from being flooded and get power back on. And yes, that night the water supply worked and the electricity was on until 3 a.m.

DAY FOUR OF THE FLOOD.
The staff came down and recorded the names of elderly and sick prisoners to be transferred to LPD (Adult facilities in the provincial capital) so they could receive better care and facilities.

The flood lasted for 13 days, until eventually the remaining water was pumped out and the prisoners returned to their cells, locked up again hahaha...

During those 13 days of flooding, one person died from the rehabilitation block in this prison. That's roughly how it was. The rebellion almost succeeded, if not for those dog-prisoners who sided with the officers and cared more about their status and personal wealth. If the prison went chaotic, the bosses definitely wouldn't be able to make money. And they didn't want to escape either, maybe because they only had a little time left on their sentences...

I read a report about a prison in Aceh Tamiang, saying all prisoners were released because the water had reached the roof. I hoped we would be released too, but I absolutely do not want the flood to come again. Maybe we could be released because of a massive flood, but that would be a terrible wish... hahaha.

A small self-correction after reflecting once the flood was over: I should have been braver on the second day. Maybe I could have created the kind of situation I miss from when I was outside.

That's all and thank you, my respectful greetings to all of you! Stand upright as it's always been! ★

FASTING: RESISTANCE

Reclaiming Power Over the Body and the Will

by *Kawa Intifada*

> *"O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may attain taqwa (God-consciousness)."*
> ***QS. Al-Baqarah (2):183***

Marhaban Yā Ramadhān!
Marhaban Yā Aṣḥābus Syarikat Tahanan!

Walking the long road inside this laboratory of human behavior has brought me to my fourth Ramadan in a state of deep solemnity. Fasting has become the most relevant means of self-forging for me in prison. It is not merely the fulfillment of a religious obligation (*syari'at*) or the practice of the prophets' *sunnah*, but also a mechanism of spiritual resistance.

Fasting is a universal practice of life. Many creatures undergo it as a way of adapting to nature in order to preserve their existence.

A hen fasts when it redirects all its energy toward new life within the egg. An aging eagle chooses to fast in order to prolong its life—isolating itself, shedding its beak, feathers, and claws, then waiting for the rebirth of its body. A snake fasts when its body enlarges and it prepares to shed its skin. A caterpillar fasts in the process of metamorphosis, changing from a crawling creature into a butterfly that flies free. And there are many other beings that make fasting a path of transformation.

Fasting has also been the spiritual discipline of the prophets and earlier human communities as a ritual of cleansing the soul from inner impurities in order to draw near to God, the Almighty.

Prophet Adam (AS) fasted for forty days and forty nights each year. Prophet Noah (AS) fasted while aboard the Ark. Prophet Yunus (AS) fasted while in the belly of the great fish. Prophet

Ayyub (AS) fasted while being tested with illness. Prophet Musa (AS) fasted before receiving revelation on Mount Sinai. Prophet Isa (AS) fasted for fifty days every year. Prophet Ya'qub (AS) fasted for the safety of his sons. Prophet Yusuf (AS) fasted when he was thrown into the well, when he languished in prison, and even when he served as Egypt's Minister of Economy—because he feared that being full would make him forget the hunger of the poor.

Fasting invites me to pierce the boundaries of wisdom, to delve into the *syari'at* down to its deepest layers of meaning. It teaches that human beings are servants who submit to the One who possesses absolute power, the Supreme Creator and Educator. Fasting forges discipline, teaches order in life, and instills the values of struggle and resistance by sacrificing outward and inward desires for the sake of God's will. From here, human beings evolve from mere morality toward *taqwa*, from mere ethics toward aesthetics. Fasting also reveals the starkest truth: that human beings are, in essence, weak. Without food and drink for only a few hours, the body already begins to falter.

Thus fasting becomes a training ground for the soul, especially for those who live under conditions of deprivation. It is a form of resistance against a system that seeks to dominate the self arbitrarily, dragging human beings into slavery to desire and emotion. Fasting is jihad against the deepest enemy: the self.

As ***Malik bin Dinar*** said in ***Al-Kāmil fil Lughah wal Adab***:

> *"Strive* (jihad) *against your desires as you strive against your enemies."*

Prison society is, in truth, already undergoing a long fast—fasting from freedom, from will, from rights as human beings. Enduring within a harsh social laboratory, learning the many temperaments of humanity, and being required to exercise self-control that is almost inhuman. A prison remains a prison, no matter how much the state renames it a Correctional Institution (*Lembaga*

Pemasyarakatan). Inside it, practices of bondage, exploitation, injustice, and structural violence still grow—sustained by a system that bows to capitalist hedonism.

If the human being is a microcosm—as in the Neo-Platonic schema of Ancient Greece, a site of struggle between good and evil—then prison society, insofar as it still holds on to its *fitrah* (primordial human nature), must continue to struggle against every form of tyranny in the most dignified way possible. Just as fasting teaches resistance to base desires, so too there is an obligation to resist the terror of prison and to destroy the false powers that oppress.

Allah ﷻ commands every Muslim to undertake *al-jihād al-akbar*—the greater struggle. The great struggle against *taghūt* in the heart and mind, which often manifests in our actions.

As Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an:

> *"Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the cause of taghūt. So fight the allies of Satan. Indeed, the plot of Satan has ever been weak."* ***(QS. An-Nisā': 76)***

In Islam, *taghūt* is a symbol of tyranny and human downfall—a creation of Satan, and Satan is not merely an abstract figure. Satan and his progeny take form in capitalism and in structures of power systems that openly contradict the principles of justice in Islam, both ethically-political and spiritual. Satan also appears in petty fascisms that grow within us because from childhood we have been schooled in forms of education inherited from colonialism and imperialism.

Devotion to capital and the state is a form of *taghūt*. And in the Qur'an, kings who imprisoned the prophets are also described as perpetrators of *taghūt*. *Taghūt* is not only a system; it is a way of thinking, a way of feeling, and a way of moving that oppresses the earth, living beings, and the weak—instead of living in harmony with them.

Taghūt lives in amoral and unethical values that take shape in modern institutions such as legal codes and law books written without the use of mind and heart. It hides within false concepts like ‘democracy’ and ‘civilization,’ whose falsity is now being laid bare amid the small wars leading toward the end of times.

After the *Battle of Badr* in the 2nd year of Hijrah, in the holy month of Ramadan—the very moment when fasting was first prescribed—Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said to his companions:

“We have returned from the lesser jihad to the greater jihad.”

What is meant by the greater jihad is the struggle against the tyranny of the ego, greed, and self-importance—all the inner poisons nourished by capitalism and systems of power.

Taghūt resides in our silence when we witness crimes that can no longer be described in words, and we lengthen its life when we are unwilling to speak and act against injustice. Islam’s potent remedy is *al-jihād al-akbar*: the eternal struggle against the *taghūt* within the self that thirsts for power and hungers for worldly wealth.

It is by enduring in this resistance that human beings arrive at the true beauty of life. For life is struggle.
Born. Struggle. Then Die.

Such are the stages of human life—whether ordinary people or prophets and messengers. All of them walked the path of suffering for the welfare of the people. They lived under the power of unjust rulers, yet never ceased to resist.

The struggle of prison society today resonates with the struggle of earlier human beings. The values of liberation, equality, and brotherhood have always been present with the prophets and messengers, becoming a threat to elites and rulers in every age.

The coming of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was not merely to bring the teaching of submission to Allah ﷻ, but also to move society to resist social inequality within an exploitative system. From there came the Battle of Badr, a sacred resistance against oppression, taking place in the month of Ramadan by the direct permission of Allah ﷻ.

> *"Fighting has been prescribed for you, though you dislike it. But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. Allah knows, while you do not know."* ***(QS. Al-Baqarah 2:216)***

The wisdom of Ramadan is a message for prison society and for anyone who seeks to live by divine guidance: do not stop at outward ritual. Fasting is not a reason to submit to an oppressive system, but a source of strength to hold one's head high, free oneself from bondage, stop oppression, and speak justice. For human beings are equal before God. And whoever truly

acknowledges God, when raising their gaze to Allah, will see other human beings as brothers and sisters—not as objects of power.

From Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him), he said: **"I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say"**:

> *"Whoever among you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand. If he cannot, then with his tongue. If he cannot, then with his heart—and that is the weakest of faith."* ***(Sahih Muslim, No. 49)***

In another narration it is mentioned;
From Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

> *"The most excellent jihad is to speak the truth before a tyrannical ruler."* ***(Sunan Abu Dawud no. 4344, Tirmidhi no. 2174, Ibn Majah no. 4011)***

On To The Dawn of Intifada

★

My First Christmas Night in Prison

by *Pekambara Kerdil*

(Previously published in @proletariot.projectlish)

This year, Christmas came without permission. There was no church bell ringing clearly, no candlelight trembling in the windows of a home, no laughter usually accompanying a family meal. There were only high walls, rusted bars, and damp air hanging heavily in your lungs. You sit in the corner of the cell, hugging your knees, trying to grasp one simple yet cruel fact: this is your first Christmas night in prison.

The corridor light glows pale, its light creeping in through the gaps in the bars, slicing your shadow into long lines across the floor. Each shadow feels like a question you have not answered. Earlier today, you were still standing in the street, your voice joined with thousands of others, demanding something you believed should not have to be fought for—justice, honesty, the right to be heard. Tonight, all of it feels far away, as if it happened in someone else's life.

Fritz Eichenberg, Pieta (1972)

You lean your head against the cold wall, letting your memories move on their own. You remember how tightly your hand gripped the poster, how your chest trembled each time the chants were shouted. It was not courage that you felt then, but necessity. Silence felt like a betrayal of your own conscience. And now, you pay the price of that choice with a long silence.

The sound of the officers' footsteps comes now and then, steady, almost mechanical. Keys strike against metal, making a sharp sound that keeps you awake. In the distance, someone coughs.

Someone else lets out a heavy sigh. Prison on Christmas night is not completely silent, but neither is it alive. It sits in between—like your heart right now.

Your thoughts go home. You imagine the dining table at home, the chair where you usually sit now empty. Maybe your family is praying, saying your name softly, hoping you are alright. The image tightens your throat. For the first time, you feel guilty not for taking to the streets, but for making them worry. Between conviction and love, you are pinned in place, not knowing which way to lean.

When the food is handed out—white rice, a simple side dish—you take it with trembling hands. You eat slowly, not to fill your stomach, but to mark that time is still moving. Every bite feels like a reminder that life, no matter how harsh, still demands that you endure.

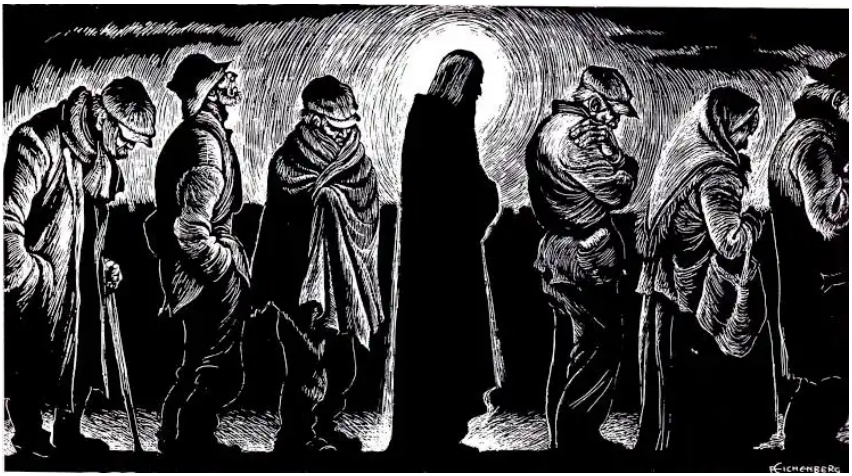
From another cell, a faint voice can be heard. Someone begins singing a Christmas song in an imperfect tune. You smile faintly, almost forgetting what it feels like to hear that song without decorations and crowds. The voice is not loud, almost breaking, but that is where its strength lies. The song does not try to celebrate; it only wants to keep someone company.

Without realizing it, your lips begin to move too. You sing softly, only for yourself. Between the lines of lyrics you have known since childhood, you remember that Christmas always begins in limitation—from a narrow stable, from the margins, from those who have nothing but hope. The realization warms your chest, even though the floor remains cold.

You gaze at the bars before you. The iron is real, hard, and non-negotiable. Yet behind it, you find something that cannot be locked away: the conviction that your choice, however heavy its consequences, was born from a desire to see a more just world. Tonight, prison holds your body, but not your reasons.

Your first Christmas night in prison does not give you answers. It only gives you space to be honest with yourself—about fear, about longing, about the resolve that still remains. When the corridor lights are dimmed and time slows again, you close your eyes.

Between the cold and the silence, you make a promise to yourself: whatever happens after this door opens, you will not regret your courage to speak out. This Christmas, you do not celebrate with freedom, but with faithfulness to your conscience. And that, you realize, is the most stubborn form of hope. ★



Fritz Eichenberg, Christ of the Breadlines (1951)

High point.

Ojet

Days keep repeating,
imagination runs wild,
living in confusion—
destruction has arrived.

Days keep repeating,
everyone is at war,
stealing and being stolen from,
chaos everywhere.

Days keep repeating,
living inside a dream,
asleep in a dream,
dreaming within a dream.

Night returns again,
a dark room,
shadows turn bright,
that feeling comes back again.

I’m almost going mad!
heading toward the abyss.
I’m almost going mad!
this life isn’t real.

Ilustrasi: Brilian

A grim dance.

Ojet

Again and again,
you pass through the shadow of dark mist.
So faintly, that voice is heard again—
and you will never truly be real

In your dance,
you are so wild and mesmerizing
No one can stop you
You cut so deep into my mind

Hey… rain, you are so calm,
bringing me back to that reverie again.
And I sink
into every note of anarchy
you have planted

You are always there
when boredom tears through this daydream
and traps me
in what is.

–OJET
Detainee, Makassar Detention Center Class I

NEWS FROM BEHIND BARS

by *Black Star*

Inside a room whose doors and windows are barred (a prison), I spend time day after day—endlessly—trying to keep my spirits up in the middle of a society that, to me, is painfully boring. Maybe this is the main reason people fear prison: not because they fear abuse by officers, but because they fear living through days that are unbearably dull and infuriating.

How could it not be? Every day we meet the same people. Morning, noon, and night—over and over again until our sentence ends. And what bores me most is how utterly terrified the prisoners here are of the guards. They submit, obey, and resign themselves to whatever the guards say. They are willing to devour one another just to look good in the guards' eyes. Imagine that: they came in here for committing crimes (in the state's eyes), and in the end they still bow to the guards' orders. How boring is that?

That is, more or less, a brief picture of conditions in here (prison). This is their society. How easily they can be "disciplined"—with threats that may never even happen, they're already terrified. They're afraid even to hang out. And that is what is happening today.

To quote a fragment of Ucok's poem, roughly like this: "A day will come when no friends are left, lyrics are no longer venomous, and the urge to rebel is nothing but remnants. But not today."

If I'm not mistaken, that poem was read out in 2018—and now it's late 2025. About seven years have passed, and I think that fragment fits better if it's changed to describe the situation now, something like: "The day has come when no friends are left, lyrics are no longer venomous, and the urge to rebel is nothing but remnants. That day is today."

Yes—this and this has happened: friends are no longer left, because of a fear that I think is excessive. Lyrics are no longer

venomous because they can no longer ignite the spirit of friends who choose to be defeated by their own fear, and the urge to rebel is reduced to extinguished remnants—put out by the threat of ending up in prison.

The question is: will you who are reading this text believe, just like that, what was written above? If yes, then you're the same as imprisoned—except what's imprisoned is not your body, but your mind. Because the real reality is this: we still have many friends left, lyrics will always be venomous, and the urge to rebel will never perish.

And even if, in the end, there will never be a war that we win—say fuck it! Because whether we win or lose, what matters is that our eyes keep shining in every battle.

From inside prison, I send word: never surrender or retreat from the fight. From Papua to Kediri, rebel even if you must wager your life. From Makassar to Bandung, create such great chaos that it can never be held back—until every prison is flattened and turned into rice fields. ★

–Black Star
Bandung Detention Center Class I-A
26 December 2025

TO ALL THE CHAOS STAR PRISONERS

by *tintamerah.raw*

I'M NOT SURE IF I SHOULD BE WRITING THIS TO YOU NOW.

I DON'T KNOW—IT FEELS UNFAIR TO WRITE SOMETHING FROM A COMFORTABLE PLACE, TALKING ABOUT YOU, OR EVEN JUST GREETING YOU INSIDE, ONLY THROUGH WORDS ON A PAGE.

AND YET, I TRULY FEEL UNEASY OUT HERE, BECAUSE ONE OF MY SIBLINGS AND FRIENDS IS ALSO INSIDE A CELL THE STATE BUILT—SUPPOSEDLY TO "DISCIPLINE" US. DAMN IT. I MISS MY SIBLING AND MY FRIEND EVEN MORE—THE ONE WHO STILL HASN'T GOTTEN OUT, ALMOST FIVE YEARS NOW, JUST FOR OWNING A PLANT.

I DON'T KNOW. I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT REVOLUTION, BECAUSE YOU UNDERSTAND IT BETTER—AND YOU PROVED IT YESTERDAY. BUT DAMN IT, WE REALLY STILL HAVEN'T SMASHED THE BARRIERS BETWEEN ALL OF US—BETWEEN ALL THE DIFFERENT MASSES THAT PROTEST!

WHAT I WANT TO SAY IS THIS;

HOLD ON. BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE NOT ALONE. I'M HERE, OUTSIDE, AND I CAN ONLY HELP AS MUCH AS I CAN. I MEET WITH COMRADES OUT HERE, BRING UPDATES ABOUT YOUR SITUATION INSIDE, TALK ABOUT HOW WE SHOULD BE ORGANIZING—OPENING EXHIBITIONS, HOLDING DISCUSSIONS, OR PUTTING ON SMALL GIGS WITH NO SUPERSTARS—MAKING EVERY GATHERING MORE INTIMATE, WITHOUT ASKING PERMISSION TO THOSE WHO CLAIM WE MUST PAY IN THE NAME OF "PERMITS."

MY FRIEND, IF EVERYTHING TRULY HAS TO BEGIN FROM INSIDE—THEN BEGIN.

SUPPORT, AND EVERY FORM OF SOLIDARITY, WILL STAY LOADED AND READY OUT HERE—SO BEGIN!

HOLD ON! STAY HEALTHY AND HAPPY, ALWAYS!

KEEP ORGANIZING—WHATEVER IT IS, HOWEVER YOU CAN. BELIEVE THAT TOMORROW REALLY CAN BE A DAY WHEN WE CELEBRATE VICTORY!

JUJUR CAPE SIH RINGATAN DARURAT TERUS

MORNING IN AN OFFICE I'M FORCED TO GO TO EVERY DAY JUST TO KEEP LIVING AND PUT OFF DYING;

THIS MORNING I OPENED A LAPTOP BORROWED FROM THE OFFICE BECAUSE MY PHONE IS BROKEN, ACCOMPANIED BY A GLASS OF WATER AND THE LEFTOVER DRIFT OF LAST NIGHT'S DAYDREAMS: HOW COULD LIFE RIGHT NOW POSSIBLY BE NORMALIZED AS AN "IDEAL" LIFE? WHAT IS THIS IDEAL LIFE—WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE, HOW DOES IT WORK? HOW MUST WE CARRY OURSELVES IN THE FACE OF THIS INFURIATING LIFE?

WHILE MY MIND WAS FILLING UP AGAIN WITH QUESTIONS, THE LAPTOP POWERED ON. I OPENED A FEW SOCIAL MEDIA APPS AND—YES—THE PORTRAIT OF TODAY'S REALITY WAS NEATLY ARRANGED AND SERVED UP THROUGH VIDEOS, WRITING, AND IMAGES ACROSS ALL KINDS OF PLATFORMS. I THINK ALL OF IT CAN BE USED AS TOOLS FOR US TO GROW TOWARD SOMETHING IDEAL. BUT DAMN IT—HERE, ON THIS LAND AND WATER WE "BUY," EACH DAY IT FEELS FARTHER AND FARTHER FROM ANYTHING IDEAL.

SURE, WE CAN STILL DODGE ALL THE BAD NEWS THAT COMES—BY WATCHING A PIRATED MOVIE ONCE IN A WHILE, OR WATCHING SOME YOUTUBER EAT A GIANT FISH WHILE WE'RE STARVING, OR LISTENING TO A PODCAST BY SOMEONE WHO SUDDENLY BECAME A SOLDIER. YES, WE CAN RUN FROM THE FACT THAT THIS LAND AND WATER WE "BUY" ARE NOT OKAY. THE LAND IS BEING SEIZED. THE WATER IS BEING POISONED BY FACTORY AND MINING WASTE.

IN TRUTH;
WE CAN PRETEND TO BE STABLE, TO BE FINE, AND KEEP AVOIDING EVERY PIECE OF BAD NEWS THAT COMES. BUT BELIEVE IT OR NOT, AVOIDING BAD NEWS AND NOT RESPONDING TO IT IS A PROCESS OF PILING IT UP—UNTIL IT BECOMES A TIME BOMB FOR OURSELVES.

WE CAN ALSO KEEP OURSELVES BUSY HUNTING FOR WORK JUST TO SURVIVE—BECAUSE I KNOW EXACTLY HOW HARD IT IS TO FIND WORK, ESPECIALLY WHEN WE DON'T COME FROM THE RANKS OF THE CONGLOMERATES, AND DAMN IT, CAPITALISM FORCES US INTO IT. YES: WORKING JUST SO WE CAN TRADE TWO SLIPS OF PAPER FOR A PIECE OF BREAD.

WE CAN ALSO CHOOSE NOT TO CARE ABOUT THE DEATH OF A MOTORCYCLE TAXI DRIVER CRUSHED BY A POLICE ARMORED VEHICLE. WE CAN CHOOSE NOT TO CARE ABOUT THE INDIVIDUALS IMPRISONED FOR TAKING TO THE STREETS YESTERDAY. WE CAN STAY SILENT WHEN A MOUNTAIN IS VIOLATED BY A GROUP OF ELITES IN THE NAME OF "REFORM" AND "DEVELOPMENT." WE CAN CHOOSE NOT TO CARE ABOUT THAT TRILLION-RUPIAH CORRUPTION CASE—SWALLOW THE BITTERNESS OF LIFE, GO BACK TO STRUGGLING TO FIND DECENT WORK, AND FALL SOUND ASLEEP AGAIN INSIDE THE DREAM OF AN IDEAL LIFE. YES, WE CAN.

BUT—
HOW LONG WILL WE KEEP SWALLOWING ALL THESE INFURIATING THINGS, AND PRETENDING TO ENJOY THEM? WILL WE JOIN FORCES TO SEIZE THAT IDEAL LIFE? OR WILL WE KEEP LETTING ALL THESE INFURIATING THINGS HAPPEN AGAIN AND AGAIN, WITHOUT KNOWING WHEN THEY'LL END? ★

LETTER TO MY FRIEND, OBFUSCATE

by *Dilaga*

Hi—how are you behind those cold iron bars? How are the days you've been getting through, moving from cell to cell? How about your new friends in there? How's the food? What does the morning and evening sun feel like? How cool is the air you breathe?

Sorry—I last visited you when you were still waiting for clarity about your trial. Back then I still felt a little calm, because when I saw you in that orange uniform, you still looked cheerful, and you'd even put on weight. We spent that short time laughing and trading stories—about how I'd been stopped by the cell guards because my motorbike key was hanging from my pants; it made me a bit nervous, and you burst out laughing. That was the last time we met.

But it didn't stop there. I've kept trying to stay updated about you—asking our friends who are still loyal enough to keep coming to visit you: about the itchy skin disease that hit you; about someone who tried to mess with you and you gifted him a solid punch, which landed you in the red cell for a while. All the way to the most painful news: that your lover chose to give up. I know it all hurts—cry, then laugh. But time will keep moving and never wait for anyone; stopping halfway is not something we can do. It seems that holding on and continuing to move forward is the only thing that makes sense.

Do you still remember when we first met at a palm-wine (*ballo*) stall? The most iconic meeting—because it turned out we were neighbors, and it wasn't a coincidence, but a connection that linked us. On the second day, we met again at our woman friend's boarding house; a night full of joy and chaos, because with the sneakiest little scheme we tried to burn a few grams of weed—even though we both knew our friend didn't allow that in her place. Well, even though the real point was that we shouldn't be too open about it in public, because it wasn't only her living there. But yeah—stubborn as we were, we did it anyway.

For the first stick we tried not to let any smoke out, which made us cough like crazy until our eyes watered—and boom—finally we got caught. With our faces flushed red and under the influence of alcohol, we both got hit with a deadly scolding. You pointed at me like I was the one who forced you to light it, but I pointed right back and said, “No, you were the one who lit it first,” and in the end we just listened to her rant while laughing. And then there was Zoza, completely and utterly smashed—so drunk he was talking in bird language. Truly, it was the happiest night. After she stopped ranting, the second stick burned more calmly, with no need to worry anymore, because she’d gone downstairs and into her room.

That night was really long and so much fun, ending with us taking photos out front of Morie’s place—a green open field with arrogant-looking housing estates rising behind it. Thinking back, that photo would make a pretty good album cover too, hahaha. I’m truly glad I got to know you, and all those beautiful memories will carry their own mark in each of our hearts.

A long-distance hug, *mammen*—keep holding on. I’m waiting for the day you’re freed. A long-distance hug too for my comrades of *Jamaah Al-Problematiqqun*. And Merry Christmas, Obfuscate!

Dilaga
Bau Bau, 24/12/25

A Holy Monastery Called Prison

by *Khariq Anhar*
(Previously published in Bahana Mahasiswa)

I've just finished reading Tan Malaka's From Prison to Prison. By coincidence, I read it while I was in prison—and that atmosphere—the curves of the space, the damp smell, the piercing sense of estrangement—made his ideas feel deeper. A place the public has long imagined as a dark space of criminality, to me instead resembled a silent monastery: a strange room of reflection that, oddly enough, feels sacred, even though it is cracked on many sides.

Entering a World Called Prison

The first time I was detained at the Metro Jaya Regional Police detention center, I spent the night alone. Images of violence and dark stories haunted my mind until I didn't dare speak to anyone. I spent two months there before being transferred to the Prosecutor's Office detention center, and finally to Salemba Detention Center.

In a single sentence: prison is not for beginners.
The world behind bars cannot be imagined by people outside. This "free hotel" is not always dark, but it is complex. Many prisoners make it a place for spiritual searching—even as very real oppression exists at the same time. In this piece, I try to record the inner journey experienced by some political detainees today—an inner journey that, unfortunately, is not free of problems.

Mental Shifts and Guilt

The first story I heard was about Pramoedya. He once lived in an old Dutch-built block—thick steel walls, maybe ten centimeters, with cramped cells measuring four by two meters. Dozens of cells were connected by a long corridor, accompanied by a television that was never turned off.

Entering that narrow space, what is most torturous is not the bars, but the change in one's mind. There is a guilt that does not come

from criminal acts, but from how the state treats activists. Yet the greatest guilt I felt was toward my family: the sudden separation, visits that were never certain, and their faces being dragged into my troubles. The first nights were filled with tears that never came when I left home to study—though in both cases I was equally far from home.

Here, everyone is forced to repent. Repentance not in the sense of a single moral code, but in the sense of finding one's balance again. Otherwise, the heart will never be calm. And calm is a scarce commodity behind bars.

Prison as a Monastery—But Activism Cannot Live on Prayer Alone

Prison reminds us that we are weak beings, wholly dependent on God. But activism—the spirit and energy of comrades—cannot possibly be driven by prayer and serenity alone. Change is not born from contemplation alone. It needs movement, strategy, and the masses.

That is why romanticizing prison as a place where "the founders of the nation were forged" needs to be challenged. Pram wrote in prison. Tan Malaka used prison years to sharpen his political ideas and continue his struggle. They did not dissolve into silence; they worked.

Misleading Romance and a New Oppression

Today, activists—both those arrested and those still outside—are like young boats on a calm sea called Indonesia. Each time the sails are raised, a storm appears; and the state sends in its marines. Some of us end up in prison, and some see this place as special because of the history of national figures. But inside prison, that romance collapses quickly.

I am disappointed in many activists.
Those on the outside: the most delicate silence—and also the most painful—especially from those who once spoke loudly about courage.

Those on the inside: some of them become new oppressors.

A question that haunts me every day:
“Why is it that you—who should be standing with the oppressed—end up repeating the patterns of oppression? Why does your idealism collapse so quickly?”

I’ve watched a small number of activists reproduce power relations exactly like the ones they criticized outside. Some monopolize access; some pressure the weaker; some exploit reputation. Seeing it up close makes me doubt whether I am among comrades—or among a new face of fascism.

The phrase “maybe you just haven’t had your turn yet” becomes a bitter joke that reflects a simple truth: give someone power, and their true character will show.

A Wasted Momentum

Life from prison to prison is a period of transit. This is where a person should pull aside, recharge, and reorganize strategy. For political prisoners, this should be an important moment to renew the direction of the struggle.

But some of them get trapped in hero-making. Momentum becomes a commodity. A major event turns into a stage for accumulating reputation and symbolic profit—and at times I even feel complicit, because I am not always aware that I, too, am part of that current.

And yet, big ideas—like those once born in Pati—demand that we return to the task of the young: rejecting all forms of falsehood and fighting anything that oppresses the people.

But how can we fight great oppression if, even in a small space, we keep reproducing new oppression?

Disappointment in the Government and in the Movement

Of course I am disappointed in a government that fails to learn from history and grows ever hungrier for power. But my greatest disappointment is with the movement itself. This year we've suffered defeat after defeat, and it feels as if nothing has truly been won. The injured, those who fell, and those imprisoned—all of it feels meaningless if the movement breaks before it even fights.

When I saw for myself how privilege leads some activists to oppress others inside prison, I briefly lost optimism. The source of the wound was not the enemy, but comrades.

Three Paths to Repair the Movement

So that the movement does not rot from within, there are three things that, in my view, are absolute:

1. Refuse power relations within activism.

Whoever you are—an NGO chair, a movement figure, or a young cadre—you are part of the collective. Your voice may be loud, but your power is no higher than anyone else's.

2. Refuse silence.

I, too, am often silent. But when power oppresses, there is no room for quiet. Activists should stand with the weak, not become new oppressors.

3. Refuse hero-making.

A movement figure is not a state official. They are an organizer, not the owner of truth. In fact, those who too often claim the truth should be watched carefully—because behind it there is usually a drive for power.

Closing: Sails Which Shall Be Raised Again

I know it is easier to criticize a government that grows more authoritarian by the day. But the people's strength today is weak not only because of state repression, but also because the movement has fractured from within.

So the question is this:
When this period of transit ends, and that young ship returns to the sea, will we still dare to challenge the waves?

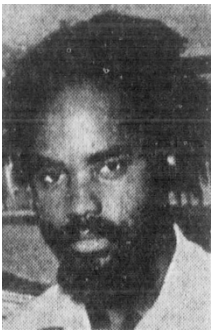
My answer is simple:
“If there is only a 1% chance of winning against a corrupt regime, it is still an idea worth fighting for.” ★

Anti-Politics and Revolutionary Solidarity

Re-printed from warzonedistro.noblogs.org/files/2017/09/Against-Prison-Politics-Society.pdf

There appears to be a trend in radical circles of distinguishing prisoners based on their so-called 'crimes', with the intent (conscious or not) to identify 'political prisoners' who, by virtue of their actions, are more deserving of support and solidarity. Prisoners who have been targeted by the state due to their political beliefs and/or actions are given special attention amongst radicals, while the rest of the prison population spending their days in a cage are often only an afterthought, used as a means to lend credibility to political ideology, or completely forgotten.

This privileged and moralistic practice has invaded radical circles and creates a distinction between 'political' and 'ordinary' prisoner. Political prisoners are said to have been imprisoned unjustly, unlike the rest of the prison population. This can manifest either as an insistence of their innocence (as in the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal), or, in cases in which the prisoner has obviously broken the law, they are viewed as acting only in response to unjust laws or conditions (as in the case of Walter Bond). In both cases, their innocence is maintained.



Mumia Abu-Jamal

But stating that some prisoners are innocent implies that others are guilty and deserve their punishment, that some unjust laws should be broken, while others should be upheld. This distinction requires predefined ideas of what is right and wrong and the application of those ideas in all situations and to all individuals, regardless of context. This process of taking subjective ideas, reifying them as universal moral principles and claiming their objectivity is no different than the state claiming that to uphold their laws is to uphold 'justice'.

The idea of justice is also problematic in that it reduces the struggle into a political debate over whose ideas are the most morally just. In this context, all actions are mere civil disobedience, attempts to expose the injustice of certain laws and to have them replaced with new ones.

Only acknowledging political prisoners devalues the experiences of all of the exploited class who are arrested for breaking the law simply to survive. Those who steal for food, sell drugs for money, and squat or sleep on the street due to the conditions that this society has forced them into are not sent to prison because of political consciousness, but because their lives, their very existence, has placed them in conflict with those in power.

Some anarchists have attempted to broaden the definition of political prisoner to include all prisoners. But to be political means to identify with a specific ideology and to believe that the universal application of that ideology will result in a better world. Since all political systems require institutions to uphold them, political action must involve either an attempt to reform current institutions to benefit a new system, or in the case of radical politics, the abolition of current institutions and the creation of new ones in their place.

If it is accepted that to be political is to act with the explicit goal of reforming institutions to suit a new political system, then the term cannot be applied to individuals who are harassed and arrested because of their place in the exploited class. They are not targeted because of any belief system, but because they are forced to break the law just to survive. They have no choice but to live in opposition to this society, and to reduce these lives to mere politics is an inaccurate and unfair representation.

Also, as anarchists shouldn't we be fighting against political ideologies, not creating new ones? If we are struggling against this system in it's totality, we should strive for a freedom based on creating conditions of existence and relationships on our own terms, and not just more freedom than we currently have by way of institutional reform.

The term political does not include those of us who do not see the struggle against this system as separate from the rest of our lives, those of us who are consciously engaging in a project of creating ourselves in a way that completely rejects the domination of the state and capital. These struggles, along with those that the exploited class engage in everyday, are directly opposed to the authority of any political program and are therefore anti-political. Not only should the label of 'political' be undesirable because it represents the thing we should be fighting against, but it is also a misrepresentation of the struggle that many people are engaged in.

None of this is meant to imply that all prisoners deserve our unconditional support. Solidarity should not be given out of obligation or a sense of duty. That is the foundation of liberal activism and cannot be the starting point for any radical project. Solidarity needs to start from ourselves and our own struggles,

and extend to people in whose struggles we can see our own, with those who we have real affinity with. We should be pushing the actions of our imprisoned comrades forward as their accomplices. If our friends need support it should be given in the spirit of mutual aid and never as charity. We need co-conspirators and comrades, not self-sacrifice in the name of the struggle.

But while we may not agree with the thoughts and actions of all prisoners, and there are certainly some who we would despise completely, we should be clear that we oppose putting any person in a cage for deviating from 'acceptable' social behaviour developed to maintain the current social order.

For the destruction of all prisons, for the release of all prisoners, for total freedom. ★

Film Recommendations

by *WBP#1312*

I want to share some film recommendations, which I'll split into two themes: ***Trials*** and ***Prison***. The synopses shown are taken from Rotten Tomatoes.

Let's get into it!

Film Recommendations re: *Trial*

1. **12 Angry Men** (1957)

After the closing arguments in a murder trial, 12 jurors must deliberate, with a guilty verdict meaning the death penalty for the defendant, a teen from the slums. As the 12 men try to reach a unanimous decision while sequestered in a room, one juror (Henry Fonda) doubts elements of the case. Personal issues soon rise to the surface, and conflict threatens to derail the delicate process that will determine the boy's fate.

2. **Pink** (2016)

A lawyer with extreme mood swings helps three women take legal action against the men who assaulted them.

3. **Capernaum** (2018)

After running away from his neglectful and abusive parents, a tough, streetwise 12-year-old boy sues them in protest of the life they have given him.

4. **The Trial of the Chicago 7** (2020)

In 1969, seven people are charged by the federal government with conspiracy and other offenses arising from the protests at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

Film Recommendations re: *Prison*

1. **1984 (Nineteen Eighty-Four)** (1984)

A man loses his identity while living under a repressive regime. In this story adapted from George Orwell's classic novel, Winston Smith (John Hurt) is a government employee whose job involves rewriting history so that the leaders of his fictional nation appear benevolent. His relationship with Julia (Suzanna Hamilton) becomes his only source of pleasure—but the lawmakers disapprove, and in this tightly surveilled society there is no escape from Big Brother.

2. **The Shawshank Redemption** (1994)

Andy Dufresne (Tim Robbins) is sentenced to two consecutive life terms for the murders of his wife and her lover and is sent to a harsh prison. Only Andy knows he didn't commit the crime. While there, he forms a friendship with Red (Morgan Freeman), endures the brutality of prison life, adapts, helps the guards, and more—over the course of 19 years.

3. **The Green Mile** (1999)

Paul Edgecomb telah berinteraksi dengan berbagai macam Paul Edgecomb has encountered all kinds of inmates. He has never met anyone like John Coffey, a large Black man sentenced for the brutal murder of two young sisters. Coffey has the size and strength to kill anyone—but not the temperament. Behind his simple, naive nature and intense fear of the dark, Coffey seems to possess extraordinary supernatural gifts. Paul begins to question whether Coffey is truly guilty of the girls' murders.

4. **Carandiru** (2003)

A doctor (Luiz Carlos Vasconcelos) listens to inmates' stories while administering HIV tests in a dangerously overcrowded Brazilian prison.

5. **Orange is The New Black** (2013)

Piper Chapman is a PR executive with a career and a fiancé when her past suddenly catches up with her. In her mid-30s, she is sentenced to a minimum-security women's prison in Connecticut for her involvement with a drug trafficker ten years earlier. Based on the book of the same name, the series follows Chapman as she trades business suits for an orange prison uniform, navigates the correctional system, adapts to life behind bars, and befriends many eccentric, unusual, and unexpected people she meets.

6. **Prison 77** (2022)

Manuel (Miguel Herrán — Money Heist, Elite) is a young accountant sentenced to an excessive 20-year term for embezzling the equivalent of 1,200 euros. With help from his cellmate PINO (Javier Gutiérrez — Silver Shell and Goya Award winner — 'Below Zero', 'Marshland', 'The Motive'), Manuel becomes the leader of a movement that will unite prisons in the fight for freedom and change prison law—and society—forever.

***(Bonus)* A Mix of Trial and Prison Themes (a bit of both):**

1. **The Baader Meinhof Complex** (2008)

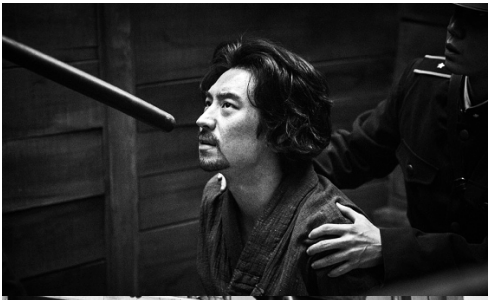
When German police violently crack down on protests against the Shah of Iran, popular journalist Ulrike Meinhof (Martina Gedeck) rebels against her dishonest marriage, leaves her children, and joins radical anarchist Andreas Baader (Moritz Bleibtreu). Along with Baader's girlfriend Gudrun Ensslin (Johanna Wokalek), they form the violent Red Army Faction and carry out a series of terrorist attacks to disrupt what they see as an increasingly fascist state order.

2. **Invictus** (2009)

After the fall of apartheid, newly elected President Nelson Mandela faces a South Africa divided along racial and economic lines. Believing he can unite his people through the universal language of sport, Mandela teams up with François Pienaar, captain of the national rugby team, to rally South Africans in an effort to win the 1995 World Cup.

3. **Anarchist From Colony** (2017)

Korean independence activist Park Yeol organizes the anarchist group Heukdohwe during the colonial era. Together with his partner Kaneko Fumiko, both are accused of involvement in a plot to bomb the Japanese emperor at the time. ★



161. Prison Manifesto

by *Asoe Djantjoek*
(Previously published in medium.com/@asoedjantjoek)

First, please forgive me if this piece feels absurd, abstract, and unclear—because I'm writing it while still emotionally unstable after speaking with a comrade who has been behind bars since the August actions.

–

I sat facing him. In a tiny room, one meter by one meter, we faced each other separated by an iron partition. His face was still young, but his eyes already carried the look of someone who had lost something that would never come back. He stared blankly at the floor, then began to speak softly, as if afraid his voice might summon the shadows he wanted to bury again.

"Fifty-five days, su."
"Just that."
"But it feels like fifty-five years."

I could only fall silent.

"I got arrested after that late-August action. I didn't even have time to go home after Friday prayers. They came after *jumatan*—no warrant, no reason. Just angry faces and polo shirts that reeked of cigarettes. My hands were twisted behind my back, my head was slammed into the car, and then—darkness."

He paused for a moment, looking up as if to make sure I was still there.

"In prison, time stops. You don't know what hour it is, what day it is—sometimes you even forget you're still human. Everything turns into a loop: wake up, get checked, get tortured, stay quiet. Sleeping on a cold floor that smells a bit like rusted iron and sweat. Behind bars, night is no longer a place to rest, but a space where you hear other people's hearts screaming in silence."

He went on, his voice hoarse, calm in a way that was frightening. “They didn’t ask who I was. They just wanted me to confess to something. They said I was a provocateur. They said I was funded by international terrorism. When really, I was just angry because life keeps getting more absurd. But in there, logic doesn’t apply. The strong are right, and the silent survive.”

“Every day, they came. Sometimes just to curse at me, sometimes to slap me, sometimes to force me to squat for hours while they walked away to smoke. Some had it worse—the guy next to me got beaten until… yeah. He could only laugh a little, maybe because if he cried, he would truly break.”

He let out a long breath.

“The hardest part isn’t the pain—it’s the uncertainty, bro. Not knowing when you’ll get out. Not knowing when the trial will be. Not knowing what’s happening outside. The world feels like it stops, and you live only as a number on the detainee list. That’s where I learned the state doesn’t need to kill you to make you dead—they just need to make you forget that you’re still alive.”

A bald-headed man in an orange detainee uniform—someone who used to be cheerful and full of energy—looked at you sharply again, but it wasn’t anger. It was exhaustion that had become part of him.

“People outside stay busy talking about the law, procedure, justice. But behind those walls, justice is just a dry joke that makes us want to throw up. We’re just pieces of bodies that get counted, locked up, and dumped into a system that doesn’t need reasons in order to function.”

He showed me his nails, staring at their tips, misshapen now.

“Fifty-five days was enough for me to understand one thing, su. Living in this world is just about surviving inside lies made by people who are afraid of ordinary people’s courage. I might get out

with my body intact, but part of me will stay behind in there—in that windowless room. In the place where human beings are skinned of their dignity until all that's left is skin and silence."

He went blank again, folding one hand over the other and staring up at the sky.

"If you hear someone else gets arrested again, don't just sympathize. Remember: behind bars, it's not a criminal—it's a mirror. A mirror of their fear of us, the ones who dare to dream."

I didn't answer.
I just stared into his eyes, as if they were drifting down a dark corridor, thinking about how easily someone in this country can be erased from reality. All it takes is one bright afternoon, one order, one reason that doesn't even need to be explained. And what remains is only the story that keeps living—because that's the one thing they can't imprison.

But then, suddenly, his life came back for a moment.
His low voice sounded like a whisper that pierced.

"Inside prison, I learned there are two kinds of people, bro. Those who obey because they're afraid, and those who endure because they know submission won't save anyone. There's a kind of tiny cigarette ember that keeps growing in our heads every time we're forced to bow—sparks they can't douse with threats, because they're born from a disgust that runs too deep."

He leaned closer to the iron, his voice like an honest poison.

"They think prison can snuff out spirit, but it turns out the opposite. Every night in that cramped room, we made a quiet vow: if we ever get out, we won't live like before. We won't ask permission to live anymore. We'll take it. We'll seize back our time, our voices, and our own bodies."

“The world outside is just as rotten as the world inside. The difference is: outside, the lies wear a cleaner uniform. But I understand now—there is no law that truly sides with the weak, no rule you can’t break. Every system is built to make you small, so you’ll feel like you need them. What they fear is the moment you realize you don’t need them at all.”

He looked at me sharply one last time—the visiting time was over.

“Sometimes I still hear the screams from the street that night. But they’re not screams of pain anymore. They’re more like a call not to stay silent. To keep living even when the world imprisons you in subtler ways. I’m getting out not to be a good person, but to make sure they don’t feel safe.”

We hugged. At the same time, he cried—speaking something painfully honest, unbearably sad, his mouth trembling.

“Fifty-five days in here was enough to make me understand one thing: freedom is never given. It can only be taken—even if that means smashing the locks and doors they’re so proud of.”

And as he walked away, I realized that what left me that afternoon wasn’t only a detainee, but someone who had seen the dark core of the world—and returned with fire in his hands. ★

Long Live Anarchy!

Reflections of a Bankrupt Activist*

by *Tenu Permana*

*) The title of this piece is taken from the title of a discussion held by Teater Utan Kayu at the launch of the book Sabtu Bersama Pater Schall, on Friday, 12 December 2025. Previously published in @themaplemedia.

—

I am bankrupt—and this is not a personal confession. It is a situation report.

Bankrupt means living under a regime that has succeeded in making resistance feel expensive, self-care feel selfish, and survival feel like a political compromise. Bankrupt means becoming a subject who is constantly asked to care, but is never cared for. And damn it—the state knows exactly how to do it. Not by killing us all at once, but by draining us slowly.

Since the August storm, repression is no longer subtle. It is visible. Scheduled. Administrative. Comrades' names turn into case numbers. Posts calling for action become evidence. The streets become "high-risk zones." This is where Michel Foucault becomes relevant: modern power does not work only through spectacular violence, but through discipline, surveillance, and normalization. Demonstrations are not banned—they are engineered to be costly. Activism is not eliminated—it is made exhausting.

At this point, being an activist is no longer just about taking to the streets. It turns into a full-time job that never pays: taking care of comrades who were arrested, spreading updates about hearings, collecting small donations for logistics, helping comrades find safe houses, and calming mothers whose children come home bruised.

At this point, capitalism and the state reinforce each other. One squeezes labor. The other squeezes courage. One says: *be productive*. The other says: *be orderly*. In between, we are forced to manage anxiety

as an individual matter. If you're stressed, blame yourself. If you're depressed, fix your sleep schedule. If you're afraid of being arrested—shut your fucking mouth.

This is what Wendy Brown calls the neoliberalization of the subject: citizens reduced to individuals made responsible for injuries produced by the system. The state creates pathological conditions, then offers private solutions. No wonder therapy rooms today are full of people who are actually living through a political crisis, not a personal disorder.

Nancy Fraser calls it a crisis of care: when the system is busy extracting productivity but forgets that humans aren't machines. Here, that crisis can be felt in the bones. Activists are expected to be militant, resilient—without ever being asked: **who takes care of them when they come home from an action? Who holds their anxiety when arrest news arrives at midnight? Who pays the cost of living when idealism has no market value?**

At the same time, the state manages fear with precision: selective arrests, symbolic criminalization, trials deliberately slowed down. Achille Mbembe calls this logic a softer version of necropolitics: the state decides who is allowed to live in peace, and who must live under threat. It doesn't have to kill you—just make life feel like it's always on the edge.

Here, activism is no longer only about opposing policy, but about surviving its side effects. So don't be surprised if many activists go bankrupt. This isn't about having a weak mentality or half-hearted intentions. It is the product of a system that knows exactly how to finish us off. That structure doesn't stay as a concept in books or as discussion jargon. It descends into the body, settles in the head, and slowly forces us to treat political wounds as personal problems.

This is where I become ideologically bankrupt.

I'm sick of romanticizing resistance. Sick of cool posters that forget to mention the cost of living. Sick of revolutionary jargon that never asks who sits with someone's parents, or with a comrade's partner left alone to face court dates—who holds the crying after long interrogations that drain words, time, and courage.

And yet, it is precisely at that point of disgust—amid what is left over and so often ignored—that reflection begins.

I start to suspect that resistance is not always loud. That heroism does not always look like gasoline, cloth, and a bottle of soy sauce. That in total bankruptcy, **care becomes the most radical form of resistance.**

At this point, resistance needs to be reread—not as an explosion, but as infrastructure. Infrastructure of memory. Infrastructure of care. Infrastructure of presence. Asking a comrade how they are is not small talk—it is a political act. Showing up at a trial—sitting for hours on hard chairs, listening to indictments that feel like a cruel joke—is not mere symbolic solidarity. It is a way of saying: **we are not leaving you, comrade.** Remembering the names of those arrested, the dates the state wants to erase—that is not nostalgia. It is sabotage against forgetting.

Hannah Arendt once wrote that power is born from action in concert. Today, that collective action is often not heroic. It looks like sitting side by side in a courtroom. Delivering food. Remembering dates. Keeping archives. Refusing to forget. This is slow work. Boring work. And not "revolutionary" by the standards of old posters. But it is exactly there that the state struggles to control it.

Because the state understands violence. But it falters in the face of everyday loyalty.

The history of resistance teaches that 'the other world' is not built all at once—it is

smuggled into the cracks of the world that exists, through small networks, through practices that refuse the logic of efficiency, through solidarity that does not wait for moral permission.

From that perspective, I begin to reread my own condition—not as failure.

Yes, yes—I am still bankrupt. But bankruptcy does not always mean the end. Sometimes it is only a sign that we have given for too long without having time to refill. And perhaps today's resistance is not about adding more bodies to the line in the street, but about making sure the line that remains does not collapse alone.

Not everyone has to take to the streets. Not everyone has to be a hero. Some people's task is to guard memory. Some people's task is to tend wounds. Some people's task is simply to ask: "are you still In a country that loves imprisoning its own citizens, that question can become the most subversive act. And maybe that is where hope is hiding—not in the promise of a grand change that may or may not arrive, but in small acts that refuse to let us become completely bankrupt as human beings.

Because as long as we can still care—even with trembling hands, imperfectly, messily, rhizomatically—resistance can still be imagined again. ★

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